

FUTURE OF THE NEGRO

Nashville Convention Decides It Is in His Own Hands.

Next Meeting of the League to be Held in Indianapolis—Booker T. Wash- ington Re-elected President— Address to the Public.

Special to The New York Times.

NASHVILLE, Aug. 21.—Addresses on industrial topics, the election of officers, and the selection of Indianapolis as the next place of meeting constituted the programme of the closing session of the National Negro Business League to-day. As usual, the hall and galleries were crowded, and much interest was manifested. To-night a banquet was given the delegates by the local Negro Business League and citizens in Jubilee Hall, one of the buildings connected with Fisk University, the leading educational institution of the race, and which was named in honor of the late Gen. Clinton B. Fisk of New York.

Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee, Ala., was re-elected President of the league. The other officers chosen are: First Vice President—G. L. Knox, Indianapolis; Second Vice President—J. E. Bush, Little Rock, Ark.; Third Vice President—Charles Banks, Clarksdale, Miss.; Corresponding Secretary—Emmet J. Scott, Tuskegee, Ala.; Recording Secretary and Organizer—Fred R. Moore, New York; Treasurer—G. C. Harris, Boston, Mass.; Compiler—S. L. Williams, Chicago, Ill.; Registrar—P. J. Smith, Boston, Mass.; Transportation Agent—C. F. Adams, Washington, D. C.

The following Executive Committee was elected: T. Thomas Fortune, Chairman, Red Bank, N. J.; S. E. Courtney, Boston; T. W. Jones, Chicago; W. A. Beasley, Macon, Ga.; S. A. Furniss, Indianapolis; J. C. Napier, Nashville; W. L. Taylor, Richmond, Va.; M. M. Lewey, Pensacola, Fla.; J. C. Jackson, Lexington, Ky.

It was proposed to-day to hold an art exposition in 1905. The matter was referred to the Executive Committee.

Steps are now being taken by the colored people of Virginia to hold an exposition celebrating the negroes' condition in this country.

When the league was called to order to-day the attendance was very large, as was the case since the opening session. The first address was made by J. A. Taylor of Robinsonville, Miss., who was followed by L. H. Williams of Marshall, Texas. F. D. Patterson of Greenfield, Ohio, spoke of the carriage manufacturing business, saying that nearly 80 per cent. of the carriages built in his town came from his factory. C. F. Johnson discussed the insurance business. The Rev. T. W. Walker, D. D., of Birmingham, Ala., spoke on the negro and his work in his State. J. E. Henderson of Little Rock, Ark., told of his experience in the jewelry business.

Theodore W. Jones of Chicago told of the development in the industrial and other lines in his city. He said:

"This much-talked-of negro problem is merely a business problem, and as such it is not so much for the white man as the black man. Its solution will be worked out by the black man in so far as he shall discourage lawlessness and condemn the commission of crime among the ignorant of his own race, in so far as he shall work earnestly and faithfully, travel the beaten path of honor and integrity. Let his success speak for him and his light shine so that it may help illuminate the dark way for his struggling brother. This consummation, so devoutly to be wished, may be hastened by the white man in so far as he shall break down the barriers over which he must climb to remove the obstacles that impede our development, wipe out the awful prejudice which renders almost deadly the very air which we breathe, stop trying to close against us the door of hope, and give us a fair field and a man's chance."

Addresses were also made by T. E. Meadows of Keystone, West Va.; J. E. Thompson of Springfield, Ill., and others.

An address to the public was adopted. The address says in part:

"The general diffusion of knowledge and the steady growth of the people will be the surest foundation upon which we can build a substantial business structure which will command the confidence and respect of our fellow citizen and enable us most effectually to contribute our share in larger measure to the prosperity and happiness of the Republic.

"We confront a future full of promise in all our relationship to the life of the Nation, in which the 'door of opportunity' shall be closed against no worthy person' as a platform upon which to stand and labor.

"The result will depend on us. Others cannot do for us what we should do for ourselves. Our business development is in our hands, and not in the hands of others."

Most of the delegates will leave for their respective homes to-morrow. They have been well entertained while here, and are much pleased with what has been done to make their stay pleasant. Speaking of the present session and the addresses of welcome extended by representatives of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Merchants' Association, and the city, the Hon. R. L. Smith of Paris, Texas, who holds the position of Deputy United States Marshal, said to-day:

"The progressive, intelligent, conservative negro that loves this country, that understands and appreciates the priceless worth of our institutions and knows their value to the element of our population that cannot begin as yet to comprehend their significance, feels a thrill of hope, of courage, I may say of gratitude to the grand men who in this year of grace have given notice to the world that all negroes do not look alike to them.

"The negroes composing the National Negro Business League know from experience that there are thousands of white men in the South who recognize the worth of the honest, straightforward, progressive negro, who can be depended upon to take the right side in matters looking to civic betterment. The tender of the Capitol for the session of the league, the offer of a trolley ride to all points of interest in the city, and the generous and hospitable treatment by all classes of Nashville's citizens must be a revelation to the country.

"I want to say to the white people of the South and the country generally that they need have absolutely no fear of the class of people here represented nor of those influenced by them. Just as soon as present restrictions are removed the white people will find that community of interest, mutual helpfulness, and the same general view of local and National questions will place the intelligent negro by their side on most of the issues that will arise."

John H. Smythe of Hanover, Va., said: "Our rights as a race are secure, despite recent constitutional actions of some of the States. Let us, then, acting on the suggestion of Thomas Jefferson, teach the negro to be a farmer and to do his duty in that sphere of life in which he finds himself. Then fifty years hence there will be no negro problem in the United States."